

MITIGATION PLAN (Phase 2)

From information gathered in the Assessment Phase, the RFP directed that a plan be prepared. The plan was required to identify the kinds of work in forest fuels that are needed to reduce the risk of wildfire to the urban interface of Boundary County. Included in the plan are to be the establishment of priorities for accomplishing the work, and direction that will be followed in the implementation phase of this project (phase 3).

PRIORITIES FOR FUEL TREATMENT WORK

When the IFM team prepared the RFP for the County, it was envisioned that priorities would be in zones, that could be displayed on a map. During the field assessment, it became apparent that there is an extremely high proportion of homes in the county at high risk in the event of wildfire. These homes are fairly evenly distributed along the roads and other ignition corridors throughout the county. It was decided that priorities for treatment could best be established by definition rather than by mapped zone. The team determined that the priorities for treatment would be in the order as presented in Table One.

TABLE ONE. Priority fuel treatments by rank.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Description</u>
#1	Demonstration projects. (Funded).
#2	Treat periphery and wildland inclusions of City of Bonners Ferry.
#3	Treat fuels around resident schools. (If schools are willing)
#4	Treat fuels around rural homes rated High Risk where owners are willing. (Includes residences in Naples and Moyie Springs).
#5	Treat fuels around homes rated as moderate risk if and when funds are available.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK BY PRIORITY

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT. There is a need for a demonstration project. This project will treat High Risk fuels in fairly visible portions of the county. The work would reduce fire risk for the properties treated, while providing examples of the work needed throughout the county, for residents to view. It is anticipated that these demonstration projects will generate the needed public awareness to get the “Fire Safe” program rolling in Boundary County. We base this conclusion on how this type program has grown in other communities, once the treatment work becomes visible to the public.

Areas selected for demonstration projects are:

1. Grandview City Park located between the Burlington Northern right-of-way and homes along the south bench of Bonners Ferry.
2. Groups of residences in the Naples/Paradise Valley; Three Mile/Moyie and Mount Hall areas of the county, to provide neighborhood accessibility to view project type work.

PERIPHERY AND WILDLAND INCLUSIONS, CITY OF BONNERS FERRY. Much of the periphery of Bonners Ferry is forest vegetation that is rated as high risk to nearby buildings if this vegetation catches fire. In addition, there are a number of inclusions of this type vegetation within the city limits that also rates high risk. Treatment of the fuels in these areas will be the second priority.

Areas that were rated as high risk include:

1. Northern city limits boundary from Marx addition to US Highway 95.
2. North bank Kootenai River from city limits east to S&I Railway.
3. West boundary of city, above BN ROW south of Grandview Park to USFS.
4. South of Ash St from by-pass to east city limits.
5. East of Cemetery Rd from Nevada St. to Wisconsin St.
6. West of Alder and Sawyer from Louisiana south to southernmost home.
7. East perimeter of city from water treatment plant to Paradise Valley Road.
8. East of Tamarak Lane, south from US 95 to southern city limit.
9. West of Golden St between Locust and Washington St, above Highway.

RESIDENT SCHOOLS. There are several schools in the county where students live on campus in dorms. The buildings for these schools are of wooden construction. All of the campuses are located in forested settings. All of the sites rated high risk in the event of a fire. The third priority for fuel treatment will be the resident school sites.

RURAL RESIDENCES RATED AT HIGH RISK. According to our assessment, somewhere between 50% and 70% of the rural homes in Boundary County rate at high risk to damage from wild fire. An analysis of fire occurrence maps compiled by Idaho Department of Lands was done. These maps indicate that fires occur throughout the wildland/urban interface, but a higher proportion occur in areas of denser populations. Homes at high risk are scattered throughout the wildland /urban interface, but a higher proportion also tend to be located in areas of denser population.

Therefore, the fourth priority for fuel treatment to reduce the risk of damage to property from wildland fire will be to treat as many high risk residences in the county as seek assistance or as grant funds allow.

RURAL RESIDENCES RATED AT MODERATE RISK. Approximately 15 percent of homes in Boundary County rated moderate risk to damage in the event of fire. Most of these homes were rated at this level because they had 25 to 50 feet of clearance between the forest vegetation and the building. This clearance is lower risk than the less than 25 feet that made homes high risk. But under conditions of high fire danger, these homes can be endangered by fire, because this amount of clearance does not really allow for a defensible space. When most property that is high risk has been treated, it is prudent to begin doing fire safe work on the next level of risk.

Therefore, the fifth priority for fuel treatment will be those homes of willing owners where the fire risk rating was moderate.